

*The authoritative source on
early churches of New Jersey*

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We've created a database and photographic inventory on more than half the 18th & 19th century churches in the state and add to it each month. We welcome and solicit all contributions and suggestions from our visitors.

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Photographic Inventory

Imlaystown Methodist Episcopal church

Imlaystown, Upper Freehold Township, Monmouth County



Brush covered the front and sides of this church when I first photographed it in 1999. A year later, the brush had been cleared away and there was evidence of other cleanup; in the fall of 2001, the building had been painted and is now advertised for sale or lease. From the L-shaped plan, I inferred it was probably a Methodist church, built sometime after 1865. I have spoken to a couple of people in Upper Freehold Township, but no one had definitive information about the original congregation. Timothy Griscom identified this definitely as a Methodist church, built in 1866 and enlarged in 1906. By the winter of 2004-2005 the church had undergone considerable restoration, apparently as a residence, and now appears safe. The stained glass

which was built, more than a hundred years ago, on land donated by Richard Salter, Jr., who was buried in the old graveyard of the church; another house, built on Cream Ridge, in 1844; and a small house erected a few years later at Imlaystown, for prayer-meeting and Sunday-school. In 1855 the house on the ridge was removed to Imlaystown, and subsequently (1864) enlarged to its present dimensions, about forty by seventy feet. This last and the first-named are the only meeting-houses now owned by the church; besides which the church owns a parsonage house and lot adjoining the churchyard at Imlaystown.

This church united with the Philadelphia Baptist Association in 1766, and retained that connection until 1813,—a period of forty-seven years. It then became a member of the New Jersey Baptist Association, and so remained until 1868,—a period of fifty-five years.

THE IMLAY'S HILL METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH dates back nearly a century. In the year 1790 a few Methodists desirous of having a meeting-house in the vicinity of Imlay's Hill met at the house of Samuel Imlay and elected the following-named persons trustees: Jonathan Coward, Joseph Page, Thomas Sill, Samuel Imlay, Joseph James, John Kein, John Gregory, Jonathan Page and John Page. At the same time Samuel Imlay conveyed to the trustees in trust one acre of land for church purposes. On this lot a church edifice was erected in 1790. It was destroyed by fire in 1807, and being rebuilt, was used until 1855, when it was replaced by the present church, which was dedicated December 25th in that year. A chapel was erected at Imlaystown in 1866, and dedicated January 30, 1867, under charge of J. P. Connelly.

The trustees elected in 1790 served until February 10, 1816, when an election was held at "Emlay's Meeting-House," with the following result: Ezekiel Robins, Joseph Rouzee, Richard C. Robbins, Thomas Throp, Cornelius Hance, John Allensmark and Andrew Nelson. The following-named preachers have served the church during the past seventy years:

1815. David Bartine, Charles Reed.

1816. Peter Van Nest, Thomas Neal.
 1817. John Finley, James Akins.
 1818. John Finley, Walter Burrowes.
 1819. John Wooley, Daniel Fidler.
 1820. James Akins, John Price.
 1821. David Best, Bartholomew Weed.
 1822. Bartholomew Weed, Eliphalet Reed.
 1823. John Walker, William Lumis.
 1824. John Walker, Burrowes Jones.
 1825. John Finley, James Moore.
 1826. John Finley, James McLaurin.
 1827. James McLaurin, Levi Prettyman.
 1828. R. W. Petherbridge, William Granville.
 1829. William Granville, James Moore.
 1830. Henry Boehm, T. Steward.
 1831. Henry Boehm, J. Canfield.
 1832. W. Williams, C. Ford.
 1833. W. Williams, — Robold.
 1834. Henry Boehm.
 1835. Edward Page.
 1836. Edward Page.
 1837. T. Steward.
 1838. T. Steward, T. Lyon.
 1839. J. Spear, N. Edwards.
 1840. J. Spear, J. Mather.
 1841. J. Long, D. Graves.
 1842. J. Long, J. Fort.
 1843. N. Chew, — Griffin.
 1844. N. Chew, J. Somerill.
 1845. J. Sleeper, S. Van Zant.
 1846. J. Sleeper, W. W. Christine.
 1847. S. Jacquett, William Tunison.
 1848. William Rogers, F. Robbins.
 1849. C. Downs, J. Camp.
 1850. C. Downs, — Scran.
 1851. S. Decker, J. Mathews.
 1852. Henry Beegle, — Primrose.
 1853. Henry Beegle, E. H. Durell.
 1854. — Palmer, — Cosea.
 1855. — Palmer, — Parvin.
 1856. J. White.
 1857. W. B. Osborn.
 1858-59. E. H. Durell.
 1860. George H. Neal.
 1861-62. N. Edwards.
 1863-64. R. B. Sutcliffe.
 1865-66. J. P. Connolly.
 1867-69. M. Shimp.
 1870. W. C. Chattin.
 1871. R. B. Stevenson.
 1872. D. McCurdy.
 1873-75. Joseph E. Willey.
 1876. T. D. Sleeper.
 1877-79. E. Waters.
 1880-82. J. E. Sawn.
 1883-84. L. A. Bearmore.

NEW SHARON hamlet lies on the line between Upper Freehold and Mercer County. A Method-